NEW BOOKS.

Continued from Seventh Page.

behind a certain chair. He could see that her hair was wet. It hung down on her neck, on her shoulders. It clung to her temples. Her eyes gazed at him stonily now. He saw it all again—the struggle! He heard his own accusations and hers. He head her pleading, her cry for mercy; and then her cry of terror. He saw her face staring up at him from the water. As he gazed the other faces faded away into the darkness. He stood staring, Henry Decherd, murderer of the woman whom he once had loved."

He killed himself with a pistol, and we have expended no grief upon him. It will be seen from what we have revealed that this is a story of the human passions and that it throbs in places with emotional and tragic energy. It seems to us that we have heard the throbs, so pronounced are they.

Rider Haggard's Latest Story.

Mr. Rider Haggard has long ago demonstrated the fact that he is a man with a story to tell and that he knows how to tell it in a straightforward and workmanlike manner. His books belong to the realm of pure romance, and are not unduly weighted with historic details or moral deductions. He chooses his period as a skilled architect selects his style, and constructs the fabric of his fancy as a master builder erects an edifice in accordance with the requirements of the model. Every stone is carefully carved and fitted in its place, and if the accuracy of detail and adjustment seems more remarkable than the novelty of the design, perhaps that is not the fault of the designer. We are a travelled and an observing people. The minarets of a mosque are as familiar to most of us as the Flatiron building, and certainly the period of the Crusader which Mr. Haggard has chosen as the scene of this season's novel, "The Brethren," is one with which we are too well acquainted to expect to meet with many surprises. If the characters which appear in this story of romance, adventure and mystery in lands that were unfamiliar to us before Mr. Cook and the historical novelist had gone into the business of enlightening the world are merely twentieth century personages masquerading in Eastern gauzes and coats of mail—well, that is characteristic of the times, too. We do our banking in Doric temples, build our flathouses in the style of Italian palaces, and copy our country houses from châteaus constructed after medi val models.

One element of novelty in this story is the introduction of two heroes of equal value, twin brothers, both engaged in loving the same fair lady, who is captured in the good old fashion that came in with the Arabian Nights and Cinderella, by the emissaries of the Saladin and is rescued by the lovers after some four hundred pages of adventure that would be thrilling if we had not read about too many such things before. The two heroes declare their love on the same day under a solemn compact to abide by the lady's choice and to remain loyal friends and brothers in spite of their rivalry in love. One brother is a born monk, but he doesn't know it, and the other is a brave warrior and knight. The lady, who is beautiful, as all such characters in romance have ever been and ought to be, cleverly conceals her preference until a Solomon like decision is forced from her toward the end of the story, when she is called upon to choose which brother shall fall a victim to the Saladin's vengeance.

Another little surprise is reserved for the reader in the fact that it is the saintly lover who yields to the charms of the mysterious Eastern princess, who so cleverly accelerates the action of the plot and rescues the principal characters at intervals all through the story. However, all ends happily at the last with a benign and clement Saladin, a very splendid wedding ceremony, in which the lady and the knight are made happy, while the saintly brother, now a tonsured monk, pronounces the benediction. The only unpleasant thing about it all is the death of the Eastern princess; but one knew from the beginning that that was bound to happen, otherwise there never would have been any monk. It was a question of the princess or the friar, and there was but one way to settle it.

The headlong movement and weird imagery of the story are less pronounced than in Mr. Haggard's earlier novels, but the tale is picturesque and vivid and will appeal to the people who are interested in the sort of thing it presents. The book is published by McClure, Phillips & Co.

A Mad Career and Tragic End.

Dolf Wyllarde's story of "Captain Amyas" (John Lane: The Bodley Head) relates the career of a commander in the British merchant service. Amyas was a popular man. He cultivated the sociable arts. He drank with the male passengers and told them stories unli e those which would not bring a blush to the most sensitive cheek. We regret to say that he flirted shamelessly with the ladies.

Anstice Le Croix, a beautiful young actress, married and husband on board, entered his cabin one day on the voyage from Durban to Southampton, kissed him, and begged him to be careful about his drinks. "Shift your drinks skilfully," she implored, "if you really must take them, so that your brain shall always be clear." He said that he owed all his success in life to women, and promised to take her words to heart. Upon that she vehemently rewarded him. We read:

"Her gravity vanished. She sprang up impulsively and held out her arms to him, her face a rainbow of smiles and emotion.

"'You darling fellow! You have the wit of one man in a thousand, and the intuition, too. Very few of your sex recognize that a woman is trying to help them when she speaks too straightly to be pleasant. U-m-m-m!' (This was murmured into D'Arcy's fair beard). 'Let me come on your knee!'

"He laughed, and shifted himself into the armchair, giving her the position she suggested. 'I am sure I hope my husband will not be prowling round! I left him in a fine temper,' said Anstice, laughing. 'Where are you going, Anstice?' he said. 'To the library for a book!' I answered. See! here it is—'Romola'—as if I should read 'Romola'! Then I walked straight through the deckhouse, and down the port side of the deck, and came in here!'

"'And who saw you come in?'

"'Two stewards and the doctor. They will not peach. That is fortunate, as they say that a woman's reputation is gone so soon as she enters your cabin and the curtain falls behind her!'

"'And where then is your own?'

"On the other side of the curtain, I presume! I left it on the deck, to put on again when I came out—I might be cold after my present quarters!' She cuddled down into his arms and laid her face against his bearded one."

The captain at last met a woman with a strong heart. Laurie Desmond snubbed him with determination when he made love to her. As she turned from him, however, the ship reeled under the shock of a collision. She immediately turned back and asked him for protection. He put his arm about her. The ship sank in three minutes. We read at the last: "The great liner had gone down, with captain and crew and passengers; and somewhere, on her deck perhaps, at the bottom of the ocean, lay the two bodies of a man and a girl—the man's arm still clasping in death the one woman he was not to have in life."

As to the final allegation or implication here, we are unwilling to credit it, though we are no apologists for the captain.

Eighteen of Our Younger Poets.

When we begin to count the American poets who are not old we are in despair. Jessie B. Rittenhouse, in her appreciative and interesting book, "The Younger American Poets" (Little, Brown & Co., Boston), admits that she has not extended her view to all of them. Had the necessary space been hers, she says, she would "have had pleasure in considering the work of Frank Dempster Sherman, who is not only an accomplished lyrist, but who has divined the heart of a child and set it to music; the cheer giving songs of Frank L. Stanton, fledged with the Southland sunshine and melody; and the verse stories of Holman F. Day, bringing from the pines of Maine their pungent aroma of humor and pathos."

But the poets considered in her book are eighteen, and if the three that she specifies had been included there still would have been only twenty-one—a number that we had as soon apply to the leaves of Vallombrosa as to the American poets who are not yet grandfathers.

If, however, a comprehensive consideration of our younger poets would have called for a work of a magnitude quite impossible, we may still be thankful for a beginning and for a satisfactory and highly readable review of eighteen of them. We have thought that Miss Edith M. Thomas was perhaps too well known and too well established a poet of excellent degree to be included in this list, which has in great part a very definite newness, but it will surely not occur to anybody to find fault because she is present. The reader will find the book thoughtful and lucid and helpful, and if he is like us he will like it. Of several of thes e poets we had never heard, but they seem to be pretty good, and we are glad to make their acquaintance.

Some Poets.

In the towering pile of volumes of verse that this season is responsible for we have found any amount of thoroughly respectable work, rhythmical, with correct ideas, in English usually good; but have looked in vain for some new note, something that stood out above the rest or had any other warrant for its appearance except the author's desire to write. Even of the authors whose names are familiar to readers of magazines, there is little to say. Their names indicate to their readers the quality of their goods, and they take care not to belie their names.

The serious poems of the late Guy Wetmore Carryl have been gathered under the title, "The Garden of Years, and Other Poems" (G. P. Putnam's Sons), with an introduction by Mr. E. C. Stedman. They read smoothly; they are distinctly literary and reminiscent of other poets; the workmanship is more than respectable usually, but over and again, when we almost believe that the author is really carried away by his theme, a jarring or prosaic line or image brings us down to earth once more.

Mr. Bliss Carman supplies a fourth installment of "Pipes of Pan" (L. C. Page & Co., Boston). These are "Songs from a Northern Garden," which means with a Canadian setting. Eminently respectable verse.

Every one knows the command Mr. Frank Dempster Sherman has of the technicalities of his art, for long ago he showed what he could do with the artificial forms of verse. That may have checked his own individual note or else it is only a mild one. The poems in "Lyrics of Joy" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) are all pleasing and graceful, but Mr. Sherman seems to take his joy rather sadly.

It is pleasant to go back to an older day with Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge's two little volumes. The sane point of view, the healthy sentiment, the spontaneously sound English, stand out strangely against the latter day prediosity. In "Rhymes and Jingles" (Charles Scribner's Sons), a new edition, admirably illustrated by Sarah S. Stilwell, of a book thirty years old, we have simple poems, intended for children, comprehensible by them, and thoroughly appreciated as experience has shown, and not travesties on grown up slang and jests, often not over refined, and aimed chiefly at adults, which real children, it is to be hoped, do not understand. "Poems and Verses" (The Century Company), is also a reprint of a book a quarter of a century old, but with many additions. These are Mrs. Dodge's contributions for older people, though many of the children's poems are included.

A real poet, if a minor one—but where are the great poets to-day?—is Mr. Clinton Scollard. In "Lyrics and Legends of Christmastide" (George William Browning, Clinton, N. Y.), he offers thirty-odd poems in all keys, grave and gay, ballads and lyrics turning upon the Christmas season. The little volume is gotten up with simple elegance in harmony with the contents.

The characteristic Christmas poem of Mr. James Whitcomb Riley, "A Defective Santa Claus" (The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis) is, of course, in dialect and replete with proper domestic sentiment. It is illustrated with many pictures from photographs.

We have wondered what the development of Mr. Frank L. Stanton's poetic gift would have been if he had not chosen to turn out a poem a day for so many years. He has not lost that painful facility, and easily as the verse glides in "Little Folks Down South" (Appletons), a little restraint might give more distinction to the thought. Dialect and plain English alternate in his verse, and he seems to be better in the former, perhaps because dialect hides in some degree what might otherwise seem platitudes.

A little Christmas anthology of religious verse, "Songs of the Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ," is published by the Monadnock Press, Nelson, N. H., in a charming little volume illustrated with woodcuts after Albrecht Dürer.

Another anthology selected with great taste is "Songs of Motherhood," by Elizabeth Johnson Huckel (Macmillans). It will appeal to all women and to every one who loves babies. It shows, too, what a wonderful medium the English language is for rendering strong emotion. In a different way it reveals again, as Palgrave's "Golden Treasury" does, the marvellous richness in poetry of the feelings of our literature.

Poems in Canadian French dialect and prose sketches make up "The Dance at Joe Chevalier, and Other Poems," by Wilmot A. Ketcham (The Franklin Printing and Engraving Company, Toledo, Ohio). While much inferior to Dr. Drummond's remarkable poems, the dialect pieces are well done, in some cases very good, and the prose episodes are interesting. The illustrations by the Toledo Tile Club are more than creditable.

There seems to be a recrudescence in charade literature, perhaps instigated by the example of Dean Le Baron R. Briggs of Harvard. Mr. William Bellamy presents "A Third Century of Charades" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) so ingenious and good that it seems a pity to waste poetic talent on playthings. The poetry here is certainly far superior to most of that which appears in print. Excellent, too, for originality, for smoothness of verse, and grip on the idea are those by Florence L. Sahler, in "Captain Kidd, and Other Charades" (Robert Grier Cooke, New York). Apparently the desire to puzzle gives more vigor to poets than the divine afflatus. Neither book gives answers, but a fearfully and wonderfully made key decides the correctness of guesses.

A man may be a good lawyer and yet a poor poet, we suppose, even though his book reach a third edition. In "Vashti. A Poem in Seven Books" (G. P. Putnam's Sons), by Mr. John Brayshaw Kaye, we have the story of Esther retold in "blank verse" and lyrics, with a rehabilitation of the first queen of Ahasuerus. Unfortunately, cutting prose into even lengths does not constitute blank verse, and in the construction of lyrics something is needed beside rhymes and the right number of feet. That something, we fear, Mr. Kaye lacks. The saying is that it is born, not made.

Mr. Walter Allen Rice's ode, "A National Pæan," which gives the title to his volume of verse published by Richard G. Badger, Boston, was sung, if we understand the author rightly, at the Pan-American Exhibition at Buffalo, three years ago. It is a very respectable occasional poem for a popular celebration. The rest of the copious output of Mr. Rice's muse does not rise above the commonplace.

There is intensity of feeling and a sense of rhythm and melody in "Italia's Fornarina," by Elizabeth Helène Freston (Broadway Publishing Company), so that we get here and there what the French would call "a fine line." The story is that of Raphael's love modified for melodramatic ends. The get up of the poem is rather sumptuous and eccentric than in good taste, and the violet mottling of the paper interferes with reading the text. The illustrations are the worst we have seen in many a long year.

A Play About Shakespeare.

Sir Thomas Lacy stands for one of the characters in Dr. Richard Garnett's drama of "William Shakespeare, Pedagogue and Poacher" (John Lane: the Bodley Head). He misses deer from the groves of Charlcote and addresses Moles, forester and ratcatcher, upon the subject. He inquires of Moles, among other things:

> Say, doth the broom bestriding sorceress,
> Companioned with foul incubi, entwine
> Her skinny arms round the reluctant deer,
> And drag it to her Sabbath and her Satan?
> Or twangs the bow and speeds the silver shaft
> O' the Queen-Huntress? Hast thou e er beheld
> A covert-breaking stag impetuous
> Burst from the brake and scour down the glade,
> Followed by a giant's shadow with a spear?

This is too much for Moles, who scratches his head and says nothing. It will be noticed that Sir Thomas in addressing Moles uses the American form, "Say," instead of the English "I say"—which goes anew to show that we remain Shakespearian on this side of the water. Of course it is Will Shakespeare who is depopulating Charlcote of its deer. Between Ann Shakespeare and the business of schoolteaching this free soul feels the need of recreation. Still this pedagogue is not formal with his pupils. One of them asks him if he ever killed a pig, to which he replies:

> Aye, boy, and thou dost mind me that, when once
> A daughter of swart Egypt scanned my palm,
> This was the sibyl's redc: Beware of bacon.
> Dark speech! which the far future shall unriddle.

Prophetic as well as facetious, and he already shows his notorious love of a pun. For that matter a number of the characters are prophetic, employing favorite Shakespearian phrases as often as opportunity offers. This is intentional and valuable, establishing a very tangible Shakespearian atmosphere. When Shakespeare is taken up for poaching, Ann Shakespeare prays, not for a pardon, but for a penalty. To Sir Thomas Lacy she says:

> Long have I groaned o'er William s evil courses,
> And mourned to know my household fed by rapine,
> And mine own stomach's pure integrity
> Polluted by his depredations.
> How oft when spit hath turned or caldron bubbled,
> Mid savory smells and steams have I with voice
> Gentle and low, an excellent thing in woman,
> Demanded, William, whence this venison?
> And he would laugh, and cite some silly tale
> Of Theseus or the ghost of Herne the Hunter.
> Pardon I pray not then, but penalty
> Conducive to his reformation.

At the last Shakespeare bids Ann farewell for ten years, tells her to mind the children and "cherish the harmless, necessary cat," and rides off in the company of the Earl of Leicester to be a playwright in London. "To horse! to horse!" says Leicester at the last, and the curtain falls. A facetious drama, plainly written for fun, and not at all to be condemned for that reason.

The Second King George in a Good Story.

King George II. of England is a character in the Earl of Iddesleigh's very interesting story called "Charms" (John Lane: The Bodley Head) The author thinks that the second George has not been quite fairly represented in history. Lord Hervey in his memoirs is the great authority concerning him, and of this chronicler it is said here: "Lord Hervey was a fine gentleman, dainty in disposition, and endowed with unrivalled powers of taking jest for earnest. To such a man George the Second was thoroughly unsympathetic, since he was neither a fine gentleman nor dainty, and he loved his jokes, though he might not be particular about their standard of excellence."

The King George of this story is, among other things, and we suspect chiefly, an amusing monarch. The author is no Lord Hervey, and he has got the fun out of his King. The anecdotes related by this George are lovely. We have marked one of them at page 99. The conversation at the card tables at Kensington Palace was running at the moment on doctors The distinguished Dr. Friend had been arrested and the King called him a quack-salver and expressed the grim opinion that a dose of Newgate would do him no harm.

"I hate all doctors," said the King—"thieves who think more of the odd shillings in the guinea fees than they do of the recovery of their patients. Did I ever tell you how I treated a doctor? Why, I had the misfortune one day to dislocate my thumb, and the Queen insisted upon sending off post-haste for the nearest surgeon. Presently in came a fine gentleman, dressed up in black velvet and horribly perfumed. 'Let me look at the thumb, sir,' he says; so I held it out, and the rascal gave it a violent wrench. It hurt me so that I kicked his shins, and cursed him with all my heart. The fellow took it as coolly as if he were made of wood, and then he says, 'Now, sir, please to turn your thumb,' and I'll be hanged if he hadn't set the mischief to rights, ho, ho, ho!"

It comes out in the story that the King rewarded this doctor with a carriage and pair, and with the appointment of his nephew to an ensigncy in the Guards. But the King himself did not tell this. He knew when an anecdote was sufficiently rounded and had a right to stop.

The King is not all the story. The beautiful Lettice Anoby is here, who poisoned her father innocently. She believed in charms, and administered to her father a charm that she had received from her lover. Tragically it consisted of arsenic. She was convicted of murder, and the King pardoned her when her lover confessed. This lover was cherished by the King, who stuck by his friends, as the gentleman who had saved his life at the battle of Oudenarde At the last, as he lay dying, this ostensible savior confessed that he was not in the battle at all. The King was slow to believe him—he stuck by his friends, as we have said—but when at last he was convinced he "blazed up in wrath, red as a turkey cock," said to the dying gentleman, "You're a damned impudent blackguard," and "strode up and down the chamber, kicking the table and chairs in his fury."

An excellent story; and if the reader at the end of it does not feel himself much obliged to King George II. we shall be greatly deceived.

Mr. Aldrich's Judith.

When a poet of talent and of repute ventures in these degenerate days to write a play in blank verse, as Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich has in "Judith of Bethulia" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), we cannot but admire his courage. That Mr. Aldrich's performance is a thoroughly respectable one goes without saying, and the opportunity to see a competent actress give life to his heroine has aroused more than an interest of curiosity in the public. But has the author improved on the poem from which he made his play?

Mr. Aldrich is essentially a lyric poet, and that stands in his way as much as it did with Tennyson. Moreover, he has not given himself a fair chance. One strong dramatic situation does not make a play, and where the story is well known and firmly imprinted in the memory, even genius cannot build around it new incidents that the public will accept. One dramatist after another has tried to enlarge on the episode of Paolo and Francesca, and how much of all this dramatization has lasted? The hundred lines of Dante dwarf them all. So, we fear, it is with Judith.

We have her pictured once for all coming out of the tent with the oppressor's head in her hand, and what precedes and what follows are of little moment. It is a hopeless task for a dramatist to struggle against a fixed type. Smoothness of verse, delicacy of thought and of language, all that the reader will find in Mr. Aldrich's poem, and force, too. But is it a play?

The Story of "Scroggins."

"Scroggins," by John Uri Lloyd (Dodd, Mead & Co.), is a very simple, very pathetic little sketch of an eccentric old stage driver who became suddenly wealthy through lucky investments and who gave up the vocation he had followed so many years to try to enjoy his good fortune. Scroggins was a "poorhouse child," with little opportunity for study, and although he travels in many lands and seeks pleasure in many ways he finally arrives at the conclusion that "et don't make no difference how rich and ign'rant a man is, ef he only hes sense 'nough ter keep on workin' after gittin rich; but ef he tries ter quit work an' enj'y himself by lookin' at things with his eyes, an' thinkin' with his no 'count brain, an' stuffin' his one stomach like et war a hogshead, he air a fool.

"When a feller hes an empty pocket and a head full of thoughts, he kin be happy. When a feller has a million dollars in bank, and no thoughts outside of a stagecoach team, he ain't happy lessen he air holdin' of the lines."

As a result of his conclusions Scroggins unloads his million dollars on his native town for the purpose of founding an institution where young people could be taught to think and poorhouse children could have a "fair show," and goes back to the Rocky Mountain gulch to enjoy himself "stage coaching" in the old way. The book is illustrated by Reginald Birch in a sympathetic and adequate manner and is very appealing in its homely pathos and humble tragedy.

The Story of "Chuggins."

The story of "Chuggins" is one of the "Holly Tree Series," written by H. Irving Hancock and published by the Henry Altemus Company. It is a sketch of "The Youngest Hero with the Army" in Cuba, and gives a graphic picture of the siege of Santiago. "Chuggins" came of good fighting stock, with a father who carried a musket in the civil war, a grandfather who fought in the War of 1812 and a great-grandfather who served with Ethan Allen at Ticonderoga. How Chuggins tramped from the Green Mountain State down into western Massachusetts, followed a regiment as chore boy to Tampa and worked his way across to Cuba on a transport and so on to the front—all is told in a simple and convincing manner in the little sketch which, like the rest of the series to which it belongs, is a good, clean book, interesting and well written. The adventures of the young hero are not too taxing to the credulity, nor are the experiences and results of his determination to be at the front during the battle so highly colored as to arouse a spirit of emulation in those who read of them.

"Zeb, a New England Boy."

"Zeb, a New England Boy," by W. A. Stoddard (George W. Jacobs), is the leader of a little band of mischievous youths in a village academy, who make things lively for themselves and their elders in a staid New England town. There is a good natured young Englishman on the scene who hasn't forgotten his Eton days and doesn't discourage the fun. He is a mighty hunter, like the rest of his countrymen, and manages to have the sort of experiences in his pursuit of big game that boys like to read about in books since they never happen anywhere else. Zeb is a very manly, decent sort of chap, only the village is too small for him and there isn't sufficient occupation to engage his energies. His fun is pure mischief and never malicious. His pranks are merry, but never mean. The old fashioned scolding stepmother is galvanized into action and set up as a target for the boys' practical jokes, and the old time fossil professor, who was really put out of commission years ago, save in fiction, is on hand to serve as a background to the scene. There is a bit of sentiment very delicately introduced and not unduly emphasized, and the book ends pleasantly with Zeb about to be promoted to a scene of wider activity. There is nothing vulgar or unduly stimulating in the story, nothing mawkish or overheroic in its sentiment. In short, it is just the sort of book that wouldn't do a boy any harm—or any good—in the reading.

Miss Tarbell on Standard Oil.

A solid piece of investigation by a woman, more exciting by far as a story than nine-tenths of the tales of adventure that are published, Miss Ida M. Tarbell's "History of the Standard Oil Company," that has been running for two years in *McClure's Magazine*, is now published in two large volumes by McClure, Phillips & Co. The undertaking involved an immense amount of labor, the interviewing of many persons, friends or foes of the company, the rummaging through legislative investigations and a dreary mass of periodical and pamphlet literature, but there is nothing dry about Miss Tarbell's report. She has thoroughly digested her material and makes it in her presentation as attractive as romance.

The Standard Oil Company was selected as her subject because it was the first and greatest of the "trusts." She tells the story of the discovery of oil and the first development of the oil industry; then that of the manner in which Mr. Rockefeller and his associates obtained control of the business and the manner in which they have made use of their monopoly. The facts are presented objectively, with neither praise nor blame, and often in the words of the actors themselves, as told under oath before committees of Congress or of legislatures, and at the end the author presents her conclusions, the only personal

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